



HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE BRIEFING

The Montgomery County Commission for Women organized the first Women's Legislative Briefing in January 1980, co-sponsored by 12 community and women's organizations. With the exception of 1982, the briefing has been presented annually, making 2017 the 37th anniversary of this event. The number of co-sponsoring organizations has grown dramatically with nearly 65 organizations co-sponsoring in 2017. The number of participants has also increased significantly, more than tripling from approximately 200 in 1981 to over 700 in 2015. In fact, this event that began in Montgomery County has become a regional event in the state of Maryland.

The purpose of the briefing is to provide information on legislative issues of concern to women and families, including bills that will be introduced in the upcoming sessions of the Maryland General Assembly and U.S. Congress. Local and state officials are invited to attend the briefing and the reception that follows to allow participants the opportunity to meet with their legislators and discuss issues of concern.

To emphasize the role of women as key to policymaking, keynote speakers in the past have included:

Joanne Bamberger, Author, *How Women & Social Media are Revolutionizing Politics in America*
Dr. Bernice Sandler, Author of Title IX legislation
Sara Manzano-Diaz, Director, Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor
Lilly Ledbetter, Pay Equity Advocate
Dorothy Height, Founder and President Emeritus, National Council of Negro Women
Donna Brazile, Founder and Managing Director, Brazile and Associates, LLC
Eleanor Smeal, Founder and President, The Feminist Majority and Past National President of NOW
Karen Nussbaum, Director, Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor
Shinae Chun, Director, Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor
The Honorable Donna Edwards, U.S. House of Representatives
Irene Natividad, President, Global Summit for Women
Susan Wood, Ph.D., Former Assistant Commissioner for Women's Health, U.S. FDA
Cokie Roberts, Senior News Analyst, National Public Radio, Political Commentator, ABC-News
Dr. Jane Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Business & Professional Women, USA
Ellen Malcolm, President of EMILY's List
Lynne Battaglia, U.S. Attorney for District of Maryland
Patricia Blau Reuss, NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund
Anita Perez Ferguson, President, National Women's Political Caucus
Carmen Delgado Votaw, Washington Representative for Girls Scouts of the USA
The Honorable Constance Morella, U.S. House of Representatives

The Montgomery County Commission for Women (CFW) is a 15-member board, created by county law in 1972, and charged with the responsibility of advising the public, the County Executive, the County Council, and the agencies of the county, state and federal governments on the issues of concern to women. Each of the commissioners is appointed by the County Executive and confirmed by the County Council. Commissioners serve three years without compensation.

The mission of the Commission for Women is to advance women's equal and full participation in the benefits, responsibilities, and opportunities of society, and to enable women to participate as equals in the community through the acquisition of skills and competencies, information and resources. The Commission's primary responsibility is to identify inequities in laws, policies, practices and procedures, and to recommend and promote remedies.